
Assembly of First Nations

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Assemblée des Premières Nations

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SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
December 5, 6 & 7, 2006, Ottawa, ON

Resolution no. 53/2006

SUBJECT: FIRST NATIONS CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

MOVED BY: Chief Connie Big Eagle, Ocean Man First Nation, SK

SECONDED BY: Grand Chief Tim Thompson, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, QC

DECISION: Consensus

WHEREAS the AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly have passed resolutions (23/2004,60/2000 and 5/2004) supporting the implementation of the 17 recommendations of the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) *Joint National Policy Review* recommendations; and

WHEREAS Canada has signed the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* guaranteeing specific rights for children including the right to non-discrimination and preservation of families and Indigenous culture; and

WHEREAS the Assembly of First Nations signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the First Nation Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (FNCFCS) on November 21, 2006 for the purposes of advocating to address recommendations in the *Joint National Policy Review* and the *Wen: de "The Journey Continues"*; and

WHEREAS since the completion of the FNCFS *Joint National Policy Review* in June 2000 and the *Wen: de "The Journey Continues"* 2005 report, very little progress has been made to address the inadequate and inequitable funding provided to FNCFS agencies by the federal government; and

WHEREAS FNCFS agencies are unable to provide services that are needed to allow children to remain safely in their homes thereby reducing the numbers of First Nations children being taken into child welfare care; and

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 7th day of December, 2006 in Ottawa, ON

Phil Fontaine, National Chief

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WHEREAS the number of First Nations children entering the care of the child welfare system continues to rise at an alarming rate with an estimated 27,000 First Nations children currently in care; and

WHEREAS the lack of funding affects FNCFS agencies on a national scale and the lack of action on the part of INAC and the federal government to address this inequitable situation is of significant concern to First Nations leadership; and

WHEREAS the report does not take into consideration Ontario's significant population and complete child welfare statistics; and

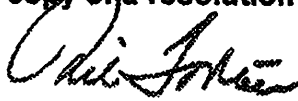
WHEREAS the 1965 Ontario Welfare Agreement was unique to Ontario and provided a funding formula for First Nations child and family services; and

WHEREAS there is a clear need for a strong political statement to advocate and pressure the federal government for the immediate implementation of the FNCFS *Joint National Policy Review* and *Wen: de "The Journey Continues"* recommendations which would result in substantive improvements for FNCFS agencies and leading to improvements for First Nations children and families.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly approve the submission of a joint complaint by the AFN and the FNCFS to the Canadian Human Rights Commission regarding the inequitable levels of child welfare funding provided to First Nations children and families on reserve pursuant to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's (INAC) funding formula for First Nations Child and Family Services known as Directive 20-1 and the 1965 Welfare Agreement in Ontario.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AFN pursue negotiations with the federal government to implement the *Joint National Policy Review* and *Wen: de* recommendations.

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Phil Fontaine, National Chief